

REMARKS

An Office Action was mailed on October 30, 2003. Claims 1-10 and 12-21 are pending.

Claims 1, 4, 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by FIG. 26 of Chia et al. (U.S. Patent 6,209,306). Responsive thereto, Applicant has limited claims 1, 4, 5 and 6 to a link having a substantially uniform cross section (see FIG. 6B) and to wherein D is between two and three times d. These additional claim limitations are clearly supported in the original specification and drawings and now define a structure that is not met by the Chia '306 chain, which shows in FIG. 26 a non-uniform cross section and a widest dimension D that could not possibly be between two and three times the largest transverse cross-sectional dimension d. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the §102(b) rejection in view of Chia '306.

Claims 2, 8, 9, 12-15, 17, 18 19 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chia et al. '306 in view of Rosenwasser (U.S. Patent 4,934,135). The teaching of Chia '306 has been overcome as set forth above with respect to the §102(b) rejection. In addition, Rosenwasser '135 teaches a 5:1 chain with alternating gap orientations. To clearly overcome the combination of Chia et al. '306 and Rosenwasser '135, Applicant has further limited claims 2 et al. and 13 et al. to a 2:1 chain with interiorly grouped links having similarly oriented gaps. In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the §103(a) rejection to Chia et al. '306 in view of Rosenwasser '135.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Otake (U.S. Patent D277,369). Otake clearly shows a 1:1 chain ratio without any discussion of link cross section or any teaching of a ratio greater than 1:1. However, Applicant respectfully submits the Otake '369 as a §102(b) reference is no longer applicable in view of the amendments submitted to address the Chia et al. '306 and Rosenwasser '135 patents.

Claims 1, 3 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by FIG. 16 of Chia et al. (U.S. Patent 6,560,955). Applicant respectfully submits that Chia et al. '955 (FIG. 16) as a §102(e) reference is no longer applicable in view of the amendments submitted to address the Chia et al. '306 patent. The Chia et al. '955 link shown in FIG. 16 suffers from the

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- 5 -

same limitations as the link of FIG. 26 from Chia et al. '306, particularly because it does not have a substantially uniform cross-section.

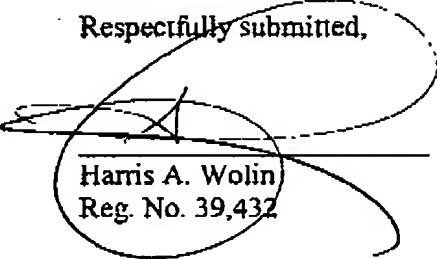
The remaining rejections to claims 10, 16 and 20 are dependent on claims that are believed to be clearly allowable over the cited art of record and for the reasons discussed above.

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1-10 and 12-21, consisting of independent claims 1 and 13 and the claims dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,


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- 6 -